

WORLD RULER

The Brethren Missionary Herald

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The Coming World Ruler

The Devil's chief and foremost concern is his effort to imitate the Lord Jesus Christ. The world dictator, of whom we read in Revelation 13:2, is the expression of Satan's desire to imitate Christ's position as king. As Satan knows, according to Zechariah 14:9, Christ is to be king over all the earth. Satan imitates Christ's incarnation and attempts to incarnate himself in the Antichrist to become a world ruler. It is definitely stated that the Antichrist will receive his power from the dragon in imitation of the manner in which Christ received His power from God the Father. When Christ was here on earth, He said: "I do always those things that please the [Father.]" The Antichrist could say the same, that he desires to please his father, the Devil.

The work of the Holy Spirit on earth is to exalt Christ. Likewise, when the false prophet, the head of apostate worldly religion, appears on the scene, he will not exalt himself, but, according to Revelation 13:12, he causes those on the earth to worship the first beast, the Antichrist. In Revelation 13:16-18 there is revealed the stranglehold the Antichrist will have in that awful day of the Great Tribulation after the church has been taken to glory. The Antichrist will have such control over the nations that no one can do as he pleases. Centralized control, of which we heard so much in the late war in the nations of the earth, will be developed to its final and logical conclusion under the reign of this coming world dictator. As in World War II, those who did not agree with the viewpoints of the dictator were sent to dreaded concentration camps for punishment, so the Antichrist will use force to gain his ends. The Antichrist will exercise control over the actions, bodies, and minds of men. It is good news to know that

the reign of Antichrist will last but for a short time. In the providence of God, we are told, it is limited to three and one half years. If Satan's man of sin were allowed to rule any great length of time, there would be no flesh saved. The Bible reveals to us that the reign of the Antichrist will be cut off by the second coming of the true King of kings from heaven.

The Two Beasts

While the events of the day of the Great Tribulation are taking place on the earth, the Antichrist and the false prophet will be in complete accord. To the inhabitants of the earth they will appear as two world figures, men of renown, but God calls them beasts. The first (Rev. 13:1-2) is a political beast, the second (Rev. 13:11-18) is a religious beast. These two beasts will probably be known before the Rapture of the church as great outstanding world personalities. However, the identification with Bible prophecy will not be made known until after the church is removed. When Christ takes the church out of the earth, there will be no power to hold back Satan's work then, so his political representatives, the first beast, will have a great rulership over the governments of the earth. His ecclesiastical representative, the second beast, will control a worldwide apostate religious system. Satanic power in that day will be so manifested that great wonders and signs will be performed. Millions of the inhabitants of the earth will be deceived by the power of Satan.

The Doom of Satan

We praise the name of our Lord that the doom of Satan is as certain as his existence. From Revelation 20:1-3 we learn that Satan will be cast into the bottomless pit (abyss) when Christ comes the second time

to reign over the earth. We learn further from Revelation 20:7-10 that Satan will remain in the abyss during the period of 1,000 years while Christ will reign as King of kings on the earth. At the end of this 1,000 years, Satan will be loosed out of his prison for a short time. God allows him to be loosed in order that the people of the earth may have an opportunity to make it known to whom they belong, either Satan or God. Many will indicate they do not belong to God even after they have seen the great blessing of the King and the kingdom in the thousand-year reign. After Satan has been loosed for a short time he will be placed in the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and the false prophet were placed 1,000 years before.

The Victory Over Satan

In our day Satan is using all his strategy and all of his wisdom to wage a warfare against God in the world. Satan is so powerful that our only hope of victory is to yield ourselves unto Christ so that His victory may be shared by us. This truth is revealed in Jude 9, where Michael the archangel did not dare bring an accusation against the Devil. It is evident that Satan is stronger than the archangel, the greatest and highest of all the angels. He only said to the Devil: "The Lord rebuke thee." So it is with us; we cannot fight Satan, but on the basis of the promises of God we can likewise say to the Devil: "The Lord rebuke you."

The believer who has the indwelling power of a risen Christ has access to a weapon which is above the realm of carnal weapons. Our weapon is the sword of the Spirit, the Word of God. One ounce of the promise of God is more powerful than all the tons of Satan's propaganda.